

Teri Ambs

From: Rick Thompson <4mrick@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 8:41 AM
To: Teri Ambs
Subject: Written testimony for Government Operations Committee re: HB 4271 and HB 5104

March 11, 2014

Senators-

Thank you for considering the issues of HB 4271 and HB 5104 in the Government Operations Committee.

The organized distribution of medical marijuana in Michigan is not a social experiment, it is not an emergent technology, it is an accepted industry with a nearly 5-year history of success.

After the passage of the Medical Marihuana Act, Michigan saw a rapid expansion of distribution centers to satisfy the needs of the state's patient population. The initial burst of businesses was pared down to approx. 75 at its lowest point; the number of Centers in operation is expanding again and now number over 125 across the state.

It's safe to say that any community currently allowing the Centers to operate are actively supporting organized distribution of medical marijuana.

Consider that the city of Ypsilanti has licensed medical marijuana dispensaries for 4 years now; during a recent City Council meeting the Chief of Police described the relationship with the city's 6 licensed and fee-paying dispensaries as having generated "no crime at all."

The state has seen incredible maturity in the industry. The wave of public sentiment in support of medical marijuana in general, and legalized distribution centers specifically, exceeds the 63% margin expressed by the people in November of 2008. As a proof, consider that in 2013 87% of the members of the House of Representatives voted yes on HB 4271 in its current form.

HB 4271 is the culmination of work begun in 2011. The bill has been evaluated, tweaked, debated and modified since its inception to become a proposal that currently contains all the essential elements a successful distribution model should. It provides for interaction with the patient and caregiver community, it gives a logical destination for any overproduction of marijuana under the current system and it gives any hesitant communities a sense of safety and control.

On behalf of patients across Michigan, approve this bill. On behalf of the ill persons who have yet to discuss a marijuana treatment program with their physician, approve this bill. On behalf of healthy Michiganders who may become ill and need a full range of medical options, approve this bill.

For the children, whose voices are not recognized but whose needs this Legislature is responsible to ensure, approve this bill and its companion, HB 5104.

Thank you.

Rick Thompson

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